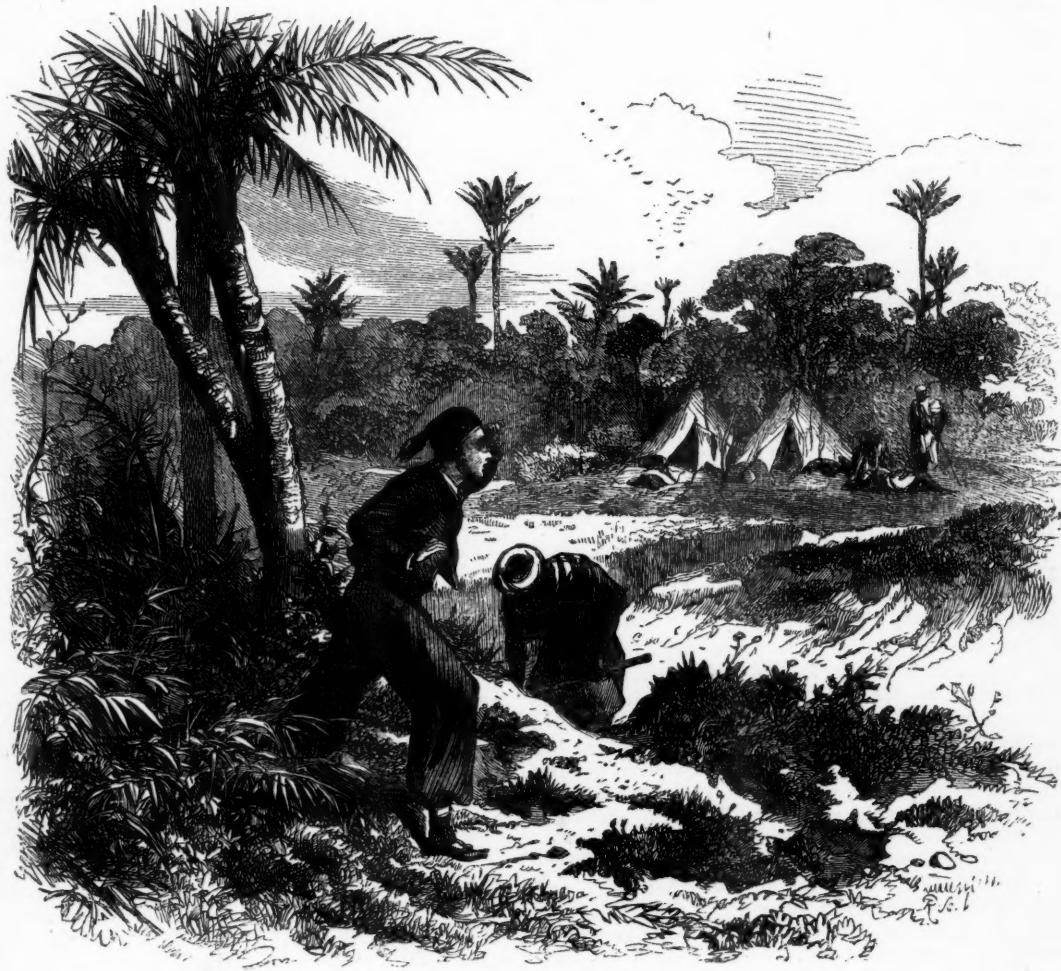


THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Conquer.*

ABDALLAH'S DISTRESS.

THE STORY OF A DIAMOND.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE LAST EVENING.

SEVERAL weeks had elapsed since our excursion to the Pyramids, and we were now approaching Christmas. I had not yet changed owner, my possessor wishing to keep me till a good opportunity of disposing of me should turn up, and just at this time diamonds were not in request. He intended, if I was sold, as was hoped, for not less than £300, to devote a part as a thankoffering to some religious object, to put a second part into Mr. Rothesay's hands for the benefit of his sister, and the

rest was to be added to his savings till wanted for "opening a house."

It was now evening, and the party were all assembled in the large room where I first saw them, Mrs. Davenport having returned only that morning from her Nile trip, which she had made without her young companion; for circumstances had occurred which altered their plans a little. A few days before they were to start in company with a family of their acquaintance, also bound for the Nile, Mrs. Rothesay fell ill, and Jessie, seeing that her husband was uneasy at her being just now without any female attendant, and needing great care, begged to

be allowed to stay and nurse her instead of going up the Nile. Some scruples were expressed at depriving her of the trip, but these were easily overruled, and the offer was accepted thankfully. Though not dangerous, the illness was tedious, and all exertion was strictly forbidden; so that the presence of an active and thoughtful young friend, who seemed to have eyes for everything and to forget no one's requirements, was quite invaluable. Jessie not only watched over Mrs. Rothesay, but managed, without neglecting her, to see that her husband's comfort was properly attended to, and to give little Zareefa daily English lessons, besides taking care that she did not waste time in gossiping with the Coptic girls opposite, from the windows, but that her day was divided between study, needlework, and household occupations, which, if pleasantly taught, are as good as play to a girl of ten years old. The child naturally became very fond of her new friend, and was never happier than when assisting her to prepare delicate chicken-broth or nice little puddings for the invalid, or to dust and arrange the parlour furniture and books; for the Egyptian servant was a new acquisition, and, though well-intentioned, so unused to European life as to be rather like a bull in a china-shop when admitted into the best room.

After a while, the low fever was got under, and drives on the desert recommended. Very soon that pure dry air brought strength to the weakened frame of Mrs. Rothesay, who meantime had become so attached to her young connection, that Mrs. Davenant's return would have been quite dreaded but for a scheme which cheered her a little, as she told Jessie. It was to persuade the good lady to sacrifice her travelling companion and join a homeward-bound party, so that Jessie might stay on, at least through the winter, where she now was. Both felt that, however desirable, the plan would not be carried out if Mrs. Davenant disapproved, as it was her kindness which brought Jessie out to Egypt; but Mrs. Rothesay was very sanguine.

It was evening, and the pilgrim of the Nile, as Mrs. Davenant rather sentimentally called herself, had just returned, and the party were now assembled in the large room where I first met them.

Mrs. Rothesay was still delicate enough to have, as she said, a good excuse for not yet resuming the arrangements for the table, which in Egypt imply some personal trouble on the part of the mistress of the house, unless she has ample means and several servants at her disposal. She therefore reclined on the divan by Mrs. Davenant's easy chair, while Jessie stood at a table in the farther end of the room, with Zareefa to assist her by going on errands to the store-room or to the kitchen as required, while she made the tea and arranged the cakes and other things, for all had dined early, and were disposed for a real supper. Mr. Rothesay was talking confidentially with Asaad in the window, apparently on a subject of deep interest, though his companion was not so absorbed by it but that he looked round from time to time to note the quiet grace and dexterous movements of the fair tea-maker.

"Well, my dear fellow," said Mr. Rothesay at last, "your secret, as you call it, has not been any secret to me for a good while past; however, you do quite right in speaking to me before opening your mind to Jessie, for I am bound to be her guardian here, at any rate; even in England, though she has nearer relatives, I believe they care much less about her interests than I do."

"But, my dear sir, you look so grave; I almost fear you think me too bold in raising my eyes to her. Perhaps my family are an objection to you, as, with the exception of one brother and his wife, they are all

Roman Catholics, and, though respectable in their own way, yet not very civilised, I confess."

"Never mind your family, Asaad; they are, as you say, respectable in their own way, and if Jessie is really attached to you, as you seem to hope, she will be willing to bear some inconvenience and trials for your sake. But I looked grave because, serious as marriage always is to thinking people, it is a doubly serious step when a young woman takes a stranger and gives up, to a certain extent, her country. She ought to be very sure indeed that he is steadily attached to her, and will make up for some sacrifices which she can hardly avoid in the union. She cannot expect to say, like the Shunamite of old, 'I dwell among mine own people.'"

"True, dear sir; but is there not something still better? Are not Christians members of the family of Jesus Christ?" said the young man, looking deeply affected, however, at Mr. Rothesay's observation.

"Yes, Asaad; and this is what makes me hope it is all for the best. I have no doubt of your being united by that bond which is even stronger than that of nationality."

"And, believe me, sir," continued Asaad, "that, though Jessie is lovely in my eyes beyond other women, it is her meekness, her humility, her quiet Christian life, so full of active work for others, and yet so gentle, that have taken my heart. She is, indeed, the companion I have prayed to be permitted to find, for 'the woman that feareth the Lord *she* shall be praised.'"

Mr. Rothesay pressed his hand in silence, but presently added, "You may speak to her to-night, if you can find an occasion; but I suspect you have managed to understand each other pretty well somehow already by dumb-show, for you don't seem to me to be in much doubt about a favourable reply. Only do not let anything make you so rash as to think of an immediate marriage. Even the diamond is hardly sufficient for that."

"No, sir; I am aware it would not be wise just yet; but it will be such a happiness to feel that we are betrothed—for the rest we can wait a year or two, if necessary. I hope Mrs. Rothesay will be able to keep her this winter, at any rate."

"That is the best plan," said his friend, "for the present; then, as you know, our firm require my presence in England next spring, and I shall have to break up our Egyptian home, and whether we return here or go to Syria is quite uncertain."

At this moment they were interrupted by a summons to the tea-table. Whether Jessie's hearing was remarkably acute, or that the conscious looks of the young man betrayed to her the subject of the late conversation, I know not; but so it was that she did not maintain her usual self-possession, and made sundry errors, quite unlike herself. She put no sugar in Asaad's tea—that signified little, as it could be easily remedied—but she put a large lump into Mr. Rothesay's cup, who detested it; then handed Mrs. Davenant the salt to eat with her sweet cake, and gave Zareefa the mustard when she asked for preserve, and then blushed so deeply at her blunders as to make matters worse. However, only friends were present, and all but Mrs. Davenant were in the secret; she, too, must indeed have discovered something, but that she was too tired and hungry, after the bustle of landing, and only a scramble dinner, as she said, on board the boat, to attend to anybody till she had had her supper. Then she was at the service of each and all.

"But I," said Mrs. Rothesay, "shall lay claim to you first of all." So saying, she established her in a

comfortable corner of the divan, and at once opened on her plan for retaining Jessie through the winter.

"Well, my dear, it's a sacrifice, I own, for I like the girl better than Mrs. Smith's Harriet, and besides she was much more use to me; of course I can't ask other people's relations to help me pack, or so forth, as freely as my own cousin that I brought out with me. Still, as I am only going straight home next month, and the Smiths and I had settled to be in the same boat for company, why I could not stand in Jessie's light. And it is for her advantage to live with you as long as you like to have her, for I have my nieces with me so much at home, and poor Mr. Davenant's sister and her girls too, that I have not a settled home to offer her; and she is very independent, too, and was bent on going into a school as teacher or as governess, where the piano was not required (you know she can't play, because her grandmother could not afford teachers for her, but she has a good education in solid things)—but, as I was saying, you have a claim as relatives, and she feels she is of great use to you. Mr. Rothesay says she is worth more than he could count to him for taking care of you, and teaching that little bright-eyed lassie yonder."

"Yes, indeed, and my husband insists on my being so idle this winter, for fear of bringing back the low fever, that I don't know how I could spare Jessie," said Mrs. Rothesay. "As to Zareefa, she shows her good sense, I am sure, for Jessie is a better and more patient teacher than I, and the child has quite adopted her; but, my dear madam, there is another matter connected with our young friend—a little secret, in fact, I want to tell you. It is that Asaad—"

"Dear me," interrupted Mrs. Davenant, starting till her cap ribbons quivered again. "You don't mean—can it really be that he has gone and fallen in love with Jessie? Why, at the Pyramids that day I fancied I saw something, but I said to myself, It's only a little nonsense, nothing serious; but, dear me, what is to be done? Will she accept him? You smile, my dear Kathleen, but what will her friends in England say?"

"Ay! what will Mrs. Grundy say?" cried Mr. Rothesay, seating himself beside them. "I will tell you. I don't doubt she will say Jessie is a very naughty girl if she doesn't prefer living all her life as a poor governess, to marrying a Christian man with a very pleasing face and manner, speaking her language fluently, and who loves and admires her heartily, and whose position in life, if not very lofty, is a good deal like that held by her own father."

"I believe you are in the right, Robert, and it's very true her father was clerk, though to a great house."

"Well, ours may become great, one day," said he; "and, if not, we may be just as happy without greatness; and meantime you won't turn against poor Jessie?"

"Who—I? Certainly not, if she really likes him; and he is not at all amiss, I must own. One could hardly expect her to give him up for objections which, as you put them, appear rather frivolous ones, though Mrs. Grundy will thunder them forth with frowning brow and stern voice, and make them seem weighty; but, after all, she is three-and-twenty, and can judge for herself; and then Mr. Asaad is more like one of your family than a stranger, and his little sister, your adopted child, too! There they stand in the window, I see; it is well that Egyptian winter is not like ours in old England, or they would find it pretty cold in that bright moonlight."

"Not they," said Mr. Rothesay, laughing; "but come, now, Mrs. Davenant, where are all *your* news?"

"Your wife's secret, as she calls it, has put them all

out of my head, Robert, and I had such a bagful of news about my adventures on the Nile, and the Smiths and their dragoman, who was the same who went up with the Seymours, and all sorts of things; but they are just like that heap of tangled purse-silk that your favourite kitten has just dragged out of Jessie's work-basket. I must put it all off till to-morrow."

"And it is now time for prayers," added Mrs. Rothesay, looking at her watch; "we must call the stray members, and put off everything else till to-morrow."

CHAPTER XVII.—THE DIAMOND CHANGES HANDS RAPIDLY.

It was about two hours before sunset, and the air was still sultry and oppressive—for the hot season had now set in—and the city looked as if seething in the hazy atmosphere; for, of all the twenty-four hours, the most trying in Egypt are those of the afternoon, especially in towns, where the air is charged with dust from constant traffic.

I was now in the Greek quarter of Cairo, that is to say, in a street inhabited almost exclusively by artisans and others of that race. That very morning I had been parted with by my owner to two Greek merchants, cousins, who were in partnership together, and made the purchase mutually, intending to get the jewel set in a showy manner, with some others, and dispose of it to a wealthy person they knew of, who was seeking ornaments for his son's bride. But a few hours sometimes make a great change in people's plans.

They had at first been well pleased with their bargain, for Asaad had sold me at a very moderate rate, because he wanted the money at once, as Mr. Rothesay was going to England, and had promised to invest it there for him. Now, however, one of the two cousins changed his mind, and thought they might have got the treasure for less, if the other had not closed too quickly. He had been talking to a Jew of his acquaintance, who, on looking at me, said he could have got such a diamond for so much. Probably it was a vain boast; but, whether true or not, discontent was sown in the mind of the Greek, who returned to the spirit-shop, where he had parted from his relative, in a very angry state of mind.

Demetry, the elder of the two, was standing at the door of the shop, sipping a glass of "arakee," a strong, coarse spirit in vogue with persons of intemperate habits in the East, and which he, like too many of his race in this city, greatly patronised. He was a rather tall and fine-looking man, but his expression and air, even the movement of his arms, and the turn of his head, all had something ruffianly and disreputable-looking, which quite destroyed the effect of a good set of features. His dress (as it was not a festival day) was very dirty and shabby, though of expensive materials; his hair, thick and uncombed, hung down from under his red cap, with a long bag to it—this being the shape of the Greek tarboush in general. Altogether, he contrasted unfavourably with some poor Moslem workmen who were engaged in sawing planks, under the direction of a Greek carpenter, and who looked more clean and respectable in their humble way than the so-called Christian.

Theodoros, the younger partner, came up, with the peculiar swagger in his gait which, I know not why, is so often seen among his countrymen of the uneducated class; and, though calling themselves merchants, and possessing some wealth, both these men were of low character, and had barely education enough to carry on business.

"Well, Demetry!" he exclaimed; "so here you are, drinking and amusing yourself, as if you were the cleverest fellow in the world, instead of being a fool."

"I a fool?" retorted his cousin. "Why, what do you mean? What has changed you so quickly? have you not shown the diamond to the old man?"

"Yes, truly; but it was no use. He has broken off the marriage for his son, and is sulky, and needs no jewels. But what is far worse is, that we have bought it too dear. I showed it to the Jew Isaac, and he says we gave two purses too much. I thought so all the time!"

Then turning to the boy who was serving in the wine-shop, he called for arakee, and swallowed a glass of that poison, which, of course, further excited him, and he and his cousin began to bandy words with increasing violence, so that presently the workmen in the carpenter's opposite looked round, and asked what was the matter. Not understanding Greek, they could not make out the cause of dispute. Demetry replied in bad Arabic, and told them that the ass yonder found fault with him about a purchase, although every one knew he was the best man of business in Cairo, and that without him the concern would fall to the ground.

His boast excited the laughter of the Moslems, and the rage of his cousin, and with difficulty the master of the shop succeeded in preventing them from coming to blows. He and some others partially pacified them for the moment, and they walked off, looking sullen enough, but together; and no more passed till they reached the Ezbekieh gardens. Here they joined some countrymen, and sat down near a so-called coffee-house belonging to a Frenchman, where more spirits than coffee was sold, and which Europeans unhappily frequented to a great degree. The cousins sat here for some little time, at first in apparent forgetfulness of what had passed, and joining in the jests of their friends; but presently one observed it was past sunset, and that it was time to return home. On this Theodoros rose, but Demetry caught his arm, saying—

"Before you go a step, give me back the diamond. I am the eldest, and it ought to be in my care."

The other refused, and a fresh quarrel was the result.

"Take care, or we shall draw a crowd," exclaimed one of their friends.

"Come, let the matter rest till to-morrow, and then talk it over when you are calm."

But the disputants had been taking more stimulating liquors, and were no longer masters of their passions. In vain the others tried to hold them back; they drew their daggers, and, before it was possible to stop the blow, Theodoros fell under a wound, struck with fatal aim by his cousin, who scarcely seemed horrified by his deed, and fled, carrying with him the cause of the quarrel, which he had a moment before wrenched from the finger of his opponent. The cries of some, the exhortations to silence of others, and the questions of the passers-by were heard as my possessor hurriedly turned down a narrow side street, his escape favoured by two or three friends, with whom such scenes were too common to have much effect, and who looked on the death of the wretched man before them as an accident rather than a crime. How Demetry passed that night I know not, being secreted in his strong box while he went out, I knew not whither. After the dawn had dispelled the shadows, and the brilliant sun of Egypt once more reigned triumphant over town and country, he entered his office with a hasty step, and looking very haggard, and more dirty and shabby even than before. He unlocked the box, took out a bag of money and a few other valuables, and put me in his purse, then locked it up, and laid the key on the table, and began to collect a few clothes, which he hastily tied in a bundle. Presently he quitted his lodgings,

expecting that the friends and other relatives of his cousin would, by this time, have succeeded in getting the police aroused, and would be on his traces. He knew their tardy ways, or he would sooner have been off. Now, however, he had no time to lose; mounted on a donkey, he rode some miles across country to a small village, and there remained in hiding for a day. In the evening he proceeded to the town of Tanta, a somewhat considerable place in Egypt, though its mud-built houses and shabby appearance do not give a stranger the idea of more than an overgrown village. There is, however, a good deal of trade carried on, and not only native merchants, but some Syrians, and Greeks, and Italians reside there. My owner placed me on his finger, desiring to attract a purchaser as soon as possible, and thus get rid of a dangerous possession, and have his store of ready money increased at the same time, as his plan was to proceed to one of the Greek islands and open a business there. He accordingly entered a sort of tavern, kept by a countrywoman of his, and asked for wine and something to eat. The landlady, an uninviting-looking person, with a very slatternly dress, half European, half Oriental, and rough coarse black hair twisted round her head, beckoned him to take a seat at one of the small tables covered with table-cloths that, apparently, had been unchanged for weeks, which stood in her principal room, and prepared to gratify his demands by bringing a bottle of Greek wine, some sour bread, and a dish of fried eggs. Meantime he stole a glance at the other occupants of the room, and saw that one was a Greek priest with a young assistant, and the other a Jew, seemingly a merchant on a journey. He took care to display the ring, while taking hold of the bottle, in such a way as to catch the quick eye of the latter traveller, and gave him a look which was perfectly intelligible. The Jew was a man of great experience, and after a quarter of an hour's investigation, putting together the appearance and physiognomy of Demetry, with his occasional questions to the landlady and the priest, and his anxious look when he saw that his ring was noticed, he decided in his own mind that he was in company with a man who had either stolen the jewel or got it in some manner which made him uneasy in retaining it, but that he was accustomed to bargaining, and would not give it up for a trifling sum, that he was a stranger in Tanta, and did not mean to stay there long, and that he wished to sell his ring, if he could, before going farther.

I did not hear the Jew's name, nor did I find out his profession, but of his acuteness there was no doubt, whatever might be his business. He first went out, as if he had not taken Demetry's hint, but soon returned on a trifling pretext; and, fearful of losing a chance, my owner at once opened a conversation with him. Demetry tried to preserve his usual swaggering indifferent air; but the other was already partly in possession of his secret, and adroitly managed to appear to know more than he did, and to imply that some one was on the scent, dropping hints about the train which would shortly arrive from Cairo, and other things which excited the alarm of the Greek. After more than an hour's whispered conversation, it ended in his going with the Jew to his lodging, and there parting with me for a less sum than he had paid. With the money thus obtained, he was obliged to depart as quickly as he could.

Though glad to be out of such a ruffian's hands, I thought that my new owner did not appear much better. However, my abode with him was as short as it was devoid of interest; he was apprehensive of some inquiry being made, and sold me to a jewel merchant in the town, who the following week delivered me in his turn

into the hands of a person quite unlike any of my previous owners. So dirty and ragged, so wild and barbarian-looking was this man, that no one who had witnessed the transaction could have failed to be utterly amazed, as he pulled out a bag of gold and paid down a handsome price for me, and, grinning to the merchant, told him that the diamond was for his bride.

His bride! who or what could she be? He was a man still young and of slender make, and, though very brown in complexion, his features were not bad, or rather might not have seemed so had he been decently clad and washed. But he was covered with rags of the most miserable kind and exceedingly dirty, while his thick hair hung matted to his shoulders, to which was suspended a bag containing some tin pots of a common description, and several miscellaneous articles such as would naturally belong to a tinker or a beggar. The merchant who sold me did not appear in the least surprised, however; and when a young Englishman, engaged in some business connected with the railway, happened to come up, and observe, in his broken Arabic, "Why, Mr. Ibraheem, what can that beggar have to buy of you?" he replied, coolly, "A valuable diamond."

"But it is impossible, surely; who can he be?" persisted the Englishman, looking at the retreating figure with disgust.

"He is a gipsy," answered the merchant; and probably he went on to tell his foreign acquaintance some further particulars; but I heard no more, for, turning down one of the narrow streets, my new owner quickly emerged on the open country. Proceeding on foot through the cane fields for a mile or rather less, he reached a small village, outside of which some of his tribe, who were on a journey, had pitched their wretched-looking tents.

Though somewhat different in dress and a few other particulars, yet in most respects this singular people resemble each other in every country where they are found, which is to say, in every part of the civilised world. The Eastern gipsy does not wear the old hat or bonnet so often seen on her English sister; but the red kerchief on the head is equally a favourite, and rags and dirt prevail alike also, being used often to conceal real wealth, and to serve as an excuse for the begging to which the race seems to be as inveterately addicted as to the worse habit of stealing. The trading in horses—especially in passing off bad ones for good—and the selling of sieves and baskets, etc., are the gipsies' favourite employments (when neither stealing nor begging) in the East as in Europe; so is the telling fortunes and imposing on the credulous, for which arts they have always been famous.

My new owner was greeted by a noisy group who were seated round a fire, where the old women of the tribe were busy cooking, chattering, and quarrelling, and some of the younger ones recounting their exploits in the neighbouring village. It seemed a strange place for jewels to find wearers. All seemed dirt and poverty around us: and the fowls stolen from the village matrons, and the ears of corn abstracted by nimble-fingered maidens from the sheaves in the field hard by, did not look like wealth, certainly. However, there are strange anomalies in life; and the love of stealing seems so strong in these wretched people, that they often pilfer when not in any distress or necessity, and when, in fact, far better off than the farmer whose produce they have taken. The supper, though rudely served, and not in a very cleanly manner, was by no means a poor one, and much hilarity prevailed. When it was over, music and dancing commenced, and a regular festival

seemed in preparation. It was, in fact, a marriage celebration, and this was the first of three nights which were to be devoted to revelry and amusement; and the villagers all came out to see and hear, though not taking any part in the rejoicing. The young girls now issued from the miserable-looking tents, arrayed no longer in rags, but in silk trousers and embroidered *yelets* (or vests with open skirts), which, if not perfectly new or clean, were, at any rate, very gay and effective, while real jewels glittered on the slender brown throats of the damsels. The men were less showy in appearance, but had also laid aside their rags and wallets, and now commenced festivities by making a flourish on the native drums and pipes. All those who were not musicians then joined in various kinds of dances in which they seemed to excel.

The revelry had lasted nearly two hours, and the admiring villagers were one by one getting tired, and retreating, when a young lad who had been for some time observing the proceedings with great delight, drew near the circle, and began asking questions of two boys who were sitting on the outside of the circle of dancers. At first he rather timidly ventured a word or two, but presently waxing bolder, said—

"I cannot understand how you gipsies say you are poor, and beg of the people, and take their chickens too, and yet you are rich!"

The elder boy winked cunningly, but made no reply; the other said, "We are clever; you peasants are stupid!"

"I am not a peasant," replied the Egyptian lad; "I serve in a great family of English people, and I am going to Syria with them after a short time. I only came here to my village to visit my relations. But as to cleverness, I am as clever as you, perhaps. You are ignorant, and cannot read."

"Read! what's the use of that? It will not bring anything," said a young girl who, tired with dancing, was now resting near them. Her betrothed was standing beside her, and the flickering light of the gipsy fire threw into strong relief her red skirt, and the bright handkerchief, worked in gold, that bound her head. Handsome, too, were the features which the fire now displayed in full view, and then threw back into shadow; but bold, and reckless, and hard was their expression, as she sneeringly repeated, "Read! So you can read, my pretty boy? And what good is that to you? Give me a bit of silver, and I'll tell you something you can't find in all your books."

The youth looked curious; but the sneer at his learning somewhat neutralised the effect of the coaxing smile that followed it.

"Come, what is your name?" persisted the gipsy girl. "I'll tell you a fine fortune, my son, if you give me silver; and I know you have some. Oh, yes, your good master, the English milord, gave you a present when you set out, you know, to visit your uncle."

"How could you tell all that?" exclaimed he, forgetting what he had just been telling of his own concerns. "My name is Abdallah," he added; "and that is a name you have no right to in your tents, for you don't believe in God; so you cannot be *servants of God*." (Alluding to the meaning of this favourite Eastern name, which is used both by Moslems and Christians.)

"How do you know that, my young fellow?" asked my new owner, laughing. "And how do you know that your books don't deceive you after all?"

Abdallah answered the question by another.

"We know you gipsies believe nothing of religion. Where do you suppose your soul goes when you die?"

"Ha! ha! We don't think upon such matters. We want to live merrily—that's all," said one of the gipsy boys. Abdallah (whom I had recognised as the young servant of the merchant, now for nearly a year with the English family who had taken him on his master's decease) was going to answer, but a pull on the sleeve from the girl stopped him. With the cunning of her race, Zohra, for so I found she was called, wished to extract from the lad the money which she guessed he had about him—if much all the better, but, even if not, small gains were always considered worth a good deal of trouble and slyness among her tribe; so she made mysterious signs to him, and, between curiosity to know what she wanted, and the fascination of her looks, he soon yielded, and stepped under the shadow of a sycamore fig-tree, where she engaged him in conversation. Meantime another girl came up to my owner: she, it seemed, was one he had formerly been near raising to the elevation now awaiting her rival (for he was greatly thought of as one of the chiefs of his tribe for cunning and daring). "So Zohra is making a friend of that lad from Cairo," she said, laughing. "Look how she holds his hand!"

"Nonsense, Daleela!" replied the man; "that is all in the way of our tribe when money is to be got. Come, however, and let us stand behind the tree and listen." So saying he led the girl into the shadow, and they could then hear Abdallah's whispered talk very plainly. He was divided between the desire to hear his fortune told by the pretty sorceress, and the wish to show her his own superiority, and to impress her with a sense of her tribe's wickedness and ignorance. "Yes, yes, I know a great deal; I can read quite well, and know what the prophets said, and also many other things," he said; "but you gipsies—truly it is a pity you should be among them, for you are very pretty."

"Ah, I am so ignorant and stupid I know nothing. I should like to talk to you, only I am afraid of my people; they are jealous," said she. "Poor Zohra! she is among the bad people, but she is not bad, my dear brother; no, no, believe me," and she wiped her eyes in the corner of her gay handkerchief. The boy, who had really been well taught, and who, from living so much with persons always seeking to do good, had some desire to imitate them, had also the weakness of being vain of his knowledge, and anxious to show it to others whenever he could, gradually was led on by Zohra's seeming interest, and by her winning smiles and tears, seen by moonlight, to forget his usual caution; so that when she parted from him, begging him to come and say farewell next day, she had got possession of his purse and of the watch, his poor master's dying bequest, and had gratuitously (as she assured him) told him a wonderful fortune, in which he was to become a Basha, and possess villages and twenty fine horses.

Early the next morning the poor dupe returned to the spot crying vengeance on the deceitful Zohra, and weeping with grief and anger; he could hardly believe the place was really the same, so utterly changed did it appear. The ashes of the fires remained, and a couple of dirty tents, with two or three ragged men, my owner among them, and two frightful old women: all else were gone. The fine silks and jewels, the bright eyes and soft words, the wild music and gay dance, all seemed to Abdallah like a dream, and he rubbed his eyes to see if he was awake. A peasant at work not far off told him that there had been a quarrel among the gipsies about a girl, and some of the men had come to blows. It was true, indeed; for my owner had received so severe

a hurt that he was obliged to stay with his mother and one or two friends, and to follow the tribe in a couple of days to the scene of a great religious festival whither they were bound. He had broken with Zohra, and had not therefore given her the diamond bought especially for her. The Egyptian lad sorrowfully retraced his steps to the distant railway-station, in the hopes that the master might give him a lift in a coal-truck to Cairo, as he was an old acquaintance, and resolving that he would in future avoid the gipsy girls as carefully as a serpent.

THE QUEEN ON THE BORDERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MEN I HAVE KNOWN."

"OLD times are changed, old manners gone;" and nowhere within the bounds of Britain can this great change be seen more palpably than on the Border-land, which her Majesty, Queen Victoria, is expected to delight with a royal sojourn. How crowd the memories of the past upon the aspects of the present! Well has the latest and mightiest of the Border bards swept his harp to the contrast—

"Sweet Teviot! on thy silver tide
The glaring balefires blaze no more—
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willowed shore,
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,
All, all is peaceful, all is still
As if thy waves, since Time was born,
Since first they rolled upon the Tweed,
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor started at the bugle horn.

"Unlike the tide of human time—"

Unlike, indeed, is the tide which rolls an English sovereign on a visit to a chief of the clan of Ker, to be the honoured and feted guest of the ducal descendant of Habbie of Cessford, where, had such a personage found a way (by no means an easy railroad) only two hundred years ago, what with drawbridges, moats, armed towers, and armed retainers, a very different reception would have been experienced, and on that wild scene there could hardly have been a meeting and a parting without mortal strife and bloodshed.

Floors,* the seat of the Duke of Roxburgh (Baron Cessford), is a noble palace built by Vanburgh, a hundred and fifty years ago, and who, on this occasion, did not earn the epitaph elsewhere bestowed upon him—

"Lie heavy on him, Earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee."

At any rate, his original construction here has been so enlarged and improved, preserving the style, as to be one of the noblest palatial residences in the kingdom, and altogether unparalleled in the loveliness of its situation on the pastoral bank of the pellucid Tweed. With good poetical warrant has the locality been described as "a kingdom for Oberon and Titania." All around, and within the circle of a few miles, endless varieties of admirable scenery are presented at every step, and the whole space is studded with objects of the deepest historical and biographical interest. Across the river, the ruins of Roxburgh Castle greet the sight with most picturesque effect; and looking down the stream, the fair features of the town of Kelso are seen, crowned with the remains of the ancient abbey, only inferior to Melrose in architectural sculpture, but far more imposing in external form, and by all accounts equally well provided in the gude auld times when

* I am not reconciled to the name in preference to Fleuris. Perhaps there may be good reason for the change; but, if Floor be the term equivalent to strath, or "flat part of a valley," how came the plural to be added to it? We would not call a mansion on a strath "Straths."

"The monks of Melrose made good cheer
On Friday when they fasted."

And, besides castles and abbeys, how many spots are there associated with the birthplaces and lives of men of genius! After the more prominent monastic ruins, Jedburgh, Kelso, Melrose, and Dryburgh, have claimed their due attention, does not the last-mentioned transport us from his grave to the immortal works of the "mighty Wizard (the Prospero) of the North"? and is not Abbotsford close at hand with all its melancholy memories? And nearer Floors, again, there is Edenhall, the birthplace of the author of the "Seasons,"

"Tutored by whom, sweet Poetry exalts
Her voice to ages; and informs the page
With music, image, sentiment, and thought,
Never to die."

Nor should the Ettrick shepherd (the author of "The Queen's Wake") be forgotten, with many other names of ancient or modern note in the minstrelsy of the Border.*

And to come to the material world, and briefly pursue our contrast. No Queen has been seen on the Borders up to the present time, since the unhappy Queen Mary spent two anxious and troubled days holding a council in Kelso. This was on a Lord Mayor's day, November 9th; and among other state matters her Majesty granted a respite to Andrew Faa, the head of the Egyptians, for the murder of one of his subjects.

Within five or six miles of Floors is Home Castle, a cradle-looking ruined Border fortress of the brave clan of Home, but rendered ludicrous, after their power was somewhat abridged, by its whimsical bravado to the challenge of the English invader :

"Willie, Willie Wassell,
I'm in ma castle;
An' a' the dougs in your town
Winna ding me doon!"

But the English general came up in the morning with his culverins, the dogs of war, I suppose, alluded to by the gallant governor, and he surrendered at once, with liberty to depart with bag and baggage.

Not so were old Roxburgh Castle sieges carried on. In the trenches here was accidentally killed, by the bursting of a powerful piece of ordnance, the Scots king, James II, and a holly-bush marks (or not long ago did mark) the spot where he fell. At Kelso his young son was crowned, James III, where, I think, James IV was also crowned. Around them swarmed the Border rievers, the moss-troopers, the outlaws, and the lawless. Some adhered sternly when it answered their own purpose, but hardly any were to be trusted. The Kers, Scots, Elliots, Maxwells, Turnbulls, Armstrongs, Johnstones, Jordans, Rutherfords, Douglases, Homes, and other Border freebooters, not to say thieves, were very uneasy subjects or neighbours—it was not till James VI of Scotland became James I of England it was declared that he who now "lifted" other folks' cattle was "nae freebooter but a thief;" and they gloried in raids, burnings, and predatory outrage and plunder, with all the disasters and dangers of such ruthless adventures.

None such could her Majesty meet. Glancing from her chamber at Floors, a few hundred yards down the bend of the river, she would behold how, as Leyden sung,

"Blossomed in woods where mighty rivers run,
Kelso's fair vale expands before the sun;"

and there the famous river bridle wrought by the magic of the wondrous Michael Scot (about the same date as when he cleft the adjacent Eildon mountain into three hills), but now (to such base uses brought at last) simply

a cauld or stone weir, to make a sufficient dam-head for the water to turn the mill, and grind corn for the inhabitants. And they, good people, are never harried nowadays, but might be characterised as the ploughman depicted auld Ayr—

" Kelso, whom ne'er a town surpasses
For honest men and bonnie lasses."

And it may be worthy of remark that the population of the Lowlands, on physical and intellectual grounds, need not fear a comparison with any portion or district in the British dominion. They are a striking amalgam of the mixture of races, the offspring of aborigines (whoever they were), Picts, Scots, Celts, Romans (a dash), Danes, Saxons, Flemings, and French (in later times). But, no matter how descended, the Borderers of our day are second to none in loyal attachment to the throne, and devoted affection to the Queen.

But adown the stream, within view of Floors, is the Ana, a sweet islet, which ministers a charm as magical as any of Michael Scot's, to the union of the Tweed and Teviot; and up here, a brief step on the latter, stood, till recently, the vast wych-elm trysting-tree, under which Border leaders are said to have assembled to arrange their forays, and lovers (for there were lovers even in those turbulent and tempestuous days!) met to speak of gentler affairs, but in the midst of feuds, and revenge ever bursting out, rarely unattended by perilous risk. Admirably is that kind of danger expressed in a single couplet of the old ballad, where a gallant youth, like the Scottish minstrel's Cranstoun, is interrogated where he got a certain love token, and he answers in the old off-hand style—

"I got it whar I dare na weel be seen,
A-pu'ng the birk on the Braes of Yarrow."

If caught, he could only expect, as another poet puts it, "short shrift at his dying day." And close to the tree stood open the mouth of a cavern, still visible, I presume, for royal inspection, stated to be connected with a subterranean and sub-pluvian communication (never explored) between Roxburgh Castle and the Abbey; and just above is the Friars, still earlier a Roman station; and higher still on Teviot's rich bank, above the Castle, may be traced the foundations of the Maison Dieu, an oasis of charity amidst those scenes of Border strife and warfare; and a few miles higher up her Majesty could drive to Minto Kaims, a strong freebooter's stronghold of craggy rocks and defiles to defy or elude attack, but the proscribed outlaw has left his refuge for the muse, and Sir Gilbert Elliot has sweetly chanted a different strain—

"O, what had my youth with ambition to do?
Why left I Amynta? why broke I my vow?"

Thus sliding down, with my desultory theme, from the rude and barbarous to the present settled and humane era, I might speak of customs and manners (within the memory of "the oldest inhabitant") when John Ker, Duke of Roxburgh, was honoured and esteemed by his sovereign, George III, as his successor now is by his sovereign, our much-loved Queen. Everything was more simple in those days than they are now. His Grace, on entering the kirk on "the Sabbath," never failed to put a picture of his friend and king, stamped on the yellow guinea gold, into the large shining pewter dish, "round as my shield," and nearly as large, conveniently set on a stool, and the superintending elder bowed his acknowledgment. It was a fine and beneficial example of charity, lightening the poor's rates; and the children of all classes were proud of the teaching of the lesson, and dropped their pence, or halfpence, into the plate in the porch, as if they were most benevolent

* The name of the greatest of Scottish bards belongs to other regions; but even Burns is associated in my memory with Tweedside. I saw him in my boyhood at Kelso, brought by my father into our playground. *Vidi tantum.*—W. J.

philanthropists. Then, the trades of the town were brave and orderly overseers and actors in all that was for the public weal. Their processions were grand, and their emblems on such occasions rested on the kirk walls—the most noticeable perhaps being that of the disciples of St. Crispin, the cordwainers, whose Scripture scutcheon-legend gave a strong hint to the barefoot lasses of the river-side as to the beautifying of their feet with shoes. These were douce, excellent, and worthy men, the fathers or grandfathers of the living generation; and it would appropriately become the latter to show, by their warm welcome to their Queen, that they are not unworthy of their honourable descent. And it is but just to add that her Majesty would see a peasantry not to be surpassed in her realm. Agriculture, carried to its utmost pitch under intelligent farmers, by honest and decorous labour, must be a grateful spectacle to rulers who love their people, and no more auspicious example could be seen than on Tweedside. We venture, moreover, to say that, in the banquet at Floors, her Majesty, for the first time in her life, would taste salmon in perfection, lured a few hours before, perhaps, by her host, or his son the Marquis of Bowmont, with their skilful fly (for the noble fish disclaims the worm), and "griddled," it is to be hoped, *à la maître boathouse Kers*, upon which not even the Chief of *Kers* could make an improvement.

But to the immediate point. Let me fancy myself seated at the royal banquet, having a small drain of Border blood in my veins, and I am struck dumb with amazement. It is true I was aware that, by the forfeitures, confiscations, beheading, and hanging of many a lesser riever, the stoutest holders of the strongest peels in the olden days had made themselves proprietors of vast territories—dukes, marquesses, earls and barons. But to witness the progeny of Branksome, Harden, Fernihurst—may be of Alnwick, Raby, and Naworth—without a sheathing of steel, amicably enjoying themselves, as "in court in gay attire," around the sumptuous board, were enough to send one into the land of dreams. A Ker feasting Scots and Elliots, as if the slaughter at Halidon and the murder in the streets of Edinburgh, and the bloodshed in many an encounter, had not shown the depth and ferocity of the Border feudalism, which desolated the country during the last three-quarters of the sixteenth century! "Ride, Rowley! hough's i' the pot," was a dreadfully frequent warning to venture forth and rob for more provision, most needed then, when Ettrick and Teviotdale, Eskdale and Liddesdale, were ravaged by intestine war, and

"All the blue bonnets were over the Border,"

not to levy their livelihood, but more cruelly and desperately destroying one another; and the *vivit ex rapto*, or life of moss-trooping rapine, was miserably exchanged for mutual murder.

It is better as it is!

Our Queen, visiting her Border-land, could find nothing but loyalty, harmony, and rejoicing, with hearty demonstrations of loyal attachment. The Borderers are naturally imbued with strong local (the first element in national) affections. In the land of minstrelsy, where the least thing of native birth is esteemed beyond compare, the transfer to good citizenship is most congenial. The bard who sung

"O, the broom, the bonnie, bonnie broom!
The broom of Cowdenknows!
For sive so sweet, so soft a bloom
Elsewhere there never grows,"

only expresses that spirit of love which extends itself

throughout all the relations of family and country, and makes the man what every righteous principle desires him to be.

I would here conclude, but it occurs to me that I ought to say a few words about a queen of another sort, whom, notwithstanding her vicinity, I had almost forgotten. I do not know if Queen Victoria will anyhow acknowledge her; but there, at Yetholm, only eight or nine miles off, lives the Queen of the Gipsies, surrounded by some seventy or eighty, the last of the tribe, Blythes, Ruthvens, Taits, and Douglases. The last of the Faas was William, on whose death, some thirty years ago, the sceptre was assumed by Charles Blythe, who had married Etty, the king's sister. But, like the rest of the old Border tribes, the gipsy race is verging on its extinction. The strangest part of their history was their recognition, as "kings of Rowmais, or Cipre, or earls of Grece, or Little Egypt," by the kings of Scotland, James IV and V, with power almost of life or death over their clan. The musical tastes of the former, and the poetical genius of the latter monarch (author of the "Gaberlunzie Man," and the "Jolly Beggar a-rovin' in the night," besides far better compositions), may account for some of this partiality, for which the unfortunate gipsies paid bitterly in the end, when they were scourged, and "banish'd," and "hangit," by half-scores and dozens at a time, till their "cup ran low," and their prince could no more compete with his *confrère* chiefs of Branksome or Cessford, notwithstanding a considerable advantage in locality, whence, from the forests, defiles, morasses, and impenetrable ravines of the Cheviot range,

"They sought the beeves and made their broth,
In England and in Scotland both!"

A TRIP THROUGH THE TYROL. BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE REGULAR SWISS ROUND."



COUNTRY WAGGON, TYROL.

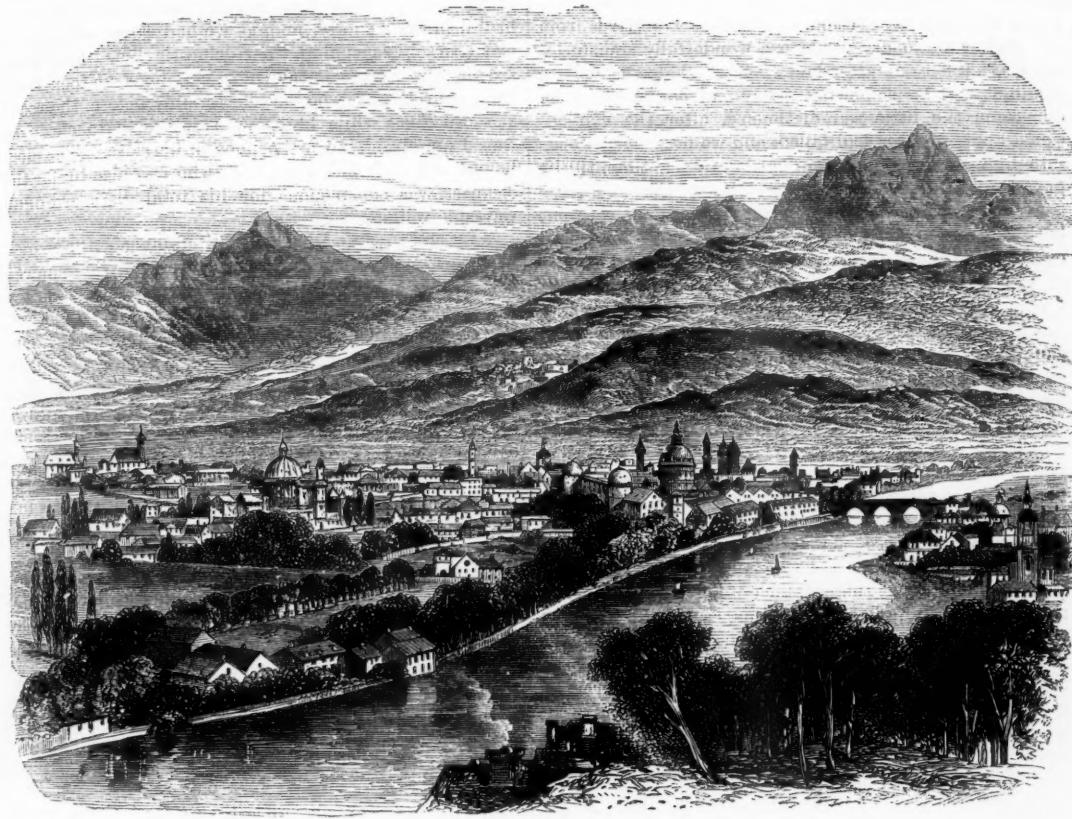
NO. II.—FROM SALZBURG TO INNSBRUCK BY BAD GASTEIN.

ON Monday morning, after packing our knapsacks, and making final arrangements for my wife's going to Innsbruck, J—— and I started in a downpour of glaring sunshine for Berchtesgaden. We were equipped for walking, and indeed expected to put up in very rough quarters before we reached Innsbruck, but drove the first part of the way. The road is as flat as this paper for some distance out of Salzburg, but two grand valleys opened their mouths towards us promising shade.

We were going up one of them that evening, to cross the range on the left into the other on the next day. Having got to Berchtesgaden in three hours, we set off at once to the König See. Neatness again. The peaks around us were bold and high, but our path seemed as

famous salt-mines on our way, were glad to get to bed.

We were awoke before five by the church bells, and, getting up, saw the whole population going to early mass, which indeed they are expected by the priests to



INNSBRUCK.

if it might have been a private one through a great man's grounds. After an hour's walking, we came suddenly upon the end of the singular lake which is called after the king's name, and where his majesty is said to find sport in shooting wretched chamois, driven from the surrounding mountains into the water by a circle of beaters and huntsmen. We thought it a sign of depraved desire for sensation to disturb this awful lonesome spot with such a scene. I know no lake like the König See. Cliffs around it, 5,000 feet high, come down into the black water without, in many places, a shelf wide enough for a cat to walk upon. There is a bit of beach at the end of the lane from Berchtesgaden, whence the visitor can take boat and be rowed about. The lake is six miles long and some 640 feet deep. We got into one of the narrow native punts, and were paddled about till the deepening gloom warned us to set off back towards our inn. Of course there was an echo. Our man produced a rusty old pistol, and set the mountains in an uproar. The din when the king comes shooting from his boat must exceed that of a general engagement.

We found the inn at Berchtesgaden full of German pleasure-seekers at high supper. In this we joined them; and then having engaged a porter to carry our traps to Hallein the next morning, and take us to the

assist at daily. Not that they seemed to dislike it, for wherever we went the churches were well filled at that early hour. Our guide presently appeared, having, I was going to say, finished his devotions; but, in fact, he seemed to continue them throughout the whole of his morning's walk, taking off his hat reverently, and bowing lower than his burden bent him at every way-side crucifix and chapel. These were very numerous. Beside them were occasional votive tablets fixed up against a tree or piece of rock, setting forth in rude pictures some accident which had happened at that spot, and asking a prayer for the sufferer's soul, or thanks for the supposed interposition, generally of the Virgin, for which he had called in his extremity. There are large numbers of these tablets in the Tyrol, and they exhibit a simplicity of design which is often more ludicrous than pathetic. The artist, *e.g.*, who desires to represent a fallen horse, puts him flat on his back, with his four legs sticking up stiff into the air. Thus there can be no mistake; the rider must have been thrown off. But to return to our devout porter. We had arranged with him to guide us to the entrance of the salt-mines, which is at the top of the mountain, above Hallein, but he quietly took us past the turn which led to the place, and then, on our unexpectedly finding out the cheat by which he thought to save himself half-an-

hour's walk, he naïvely proposed that we should pay him for his day's work, and let him deposit our knapsacks in a certain inn, so that his convenience might be consulted by an early return to Berchtesgaden. This of course we resented, expressing our opinion of him in German which was more forcible than pure. Then he humbled himself profusely. Indeed, on several occasions, we found a selection of vigorous adjectives from our pocket dictionary produce a wonderfully transforming effect upon our attendants. The guide, or driver, would at first be somewhat saucy and confident: then out came the little red dictionary, after the conventional polite phrases had failed, and we fired hard words into him as we found them out, one at a time, till he gave in.

Having bombarded our porter into ruins, we went back to the entrance of the salt-mines, and presented ourselves to the miners. Here we were dressed in suits of canvas, over our clothes, provided with a leather apron, wrong side before, to sit upon, had stiff tall hats put upon our heads, to prevent their being broken, and, candle in hand, entered the low narrow tunnel which leads to the shafts. These are sloping, and are descended by means of very long ladders without spokes, on which we sat, and slid down at a great rate. There is a rope on the right of the slide, which you lay hold of to steady yourself, wearing a large thick glove to protect the hand. After some three or four slides, we came on a lake, shallow, with a low roof; punting across this, we slid again till we reached a long tunnel, about six feet high and four wide, with a wooden horse, or trestle on wheels, standing at the entrance of it. We all got on this, astride, and a lad dragged us as fast as he could run, until we found ourselves blinking in the sunshine at Hallein. We had been put in a hole at the top of the mountain and had come out at the bottom. There was really nothing to see but a man in white canvas, with a candle in his hand, sliding before you. Of course we passed through much salt, but there were no grottoes or pillars such as, somehow, we had expected. The chief business was the traversing of a long hole, like a main drain, set at different angles; but we had much merriment in committing ourselves to the steep slides.

Having dined at Hallein, we didn't feel much inclined to tramp upon the dusty road, especially as we yearned to get into the snow region, which seemed as far off as ever; so, by a succession of return carriages and dingy little chaises, we pushed on to Lend that night. Our way lay over the Luerg pass, the "gate" of the Pongau, as this part of the valley of the Salza is called. The road passes under the huge precipices of the Tannen-Gebirge, a magnificent bare range of peaks, and then opens out into a long wide view towards Lend. Below Lend the valley becomes the Pinzgau, of which more presently. We turned out of it at Lend to go to Bad Gastein. We were now traversing the district from which thirty thousand Protestants were banished in the early part of the eighteenth century for the profession of their faith. So complete was the clearance, that colonists had to be gathered together from various parts, and even countries, to fill up the gap which had been made, and carry on the agriculture of the valley. People say that these successors of the original inhabitants appear to be almost an inferior race. They suffer from goitres, and showed by the implements they use a rude state of mechanical knowledge; but I must say that nothing could be neater than their fields and fences. The fact is, I suspect that they are ignorant and superstitious, like the rest of their neighbours, and that the devotion which they show to the Romish faith and

Austrian Government may be referred to the same causes which generally influence the Tyrol—close supervision by the priests. We saw much to make us suspect the morality of these eminently religious people. To judge by their incessant and punctilious devotions, and the way they mixed up religion with everything, they ought to have been saints; but in fact they are brutal in their sports, and, as we had some evidence, I fear coarsely sensual in their domestic life. Our lying servile porter from Berchtesgaden, whom we took fresh from church, and who bowed humbly before the roadside crucifixes while he was plotting how to cheat us, was, I am afraid, but a specimen of his class. The most honest and civil fellow we had, who was also by far the cleanest, was conspicuous for his total disregard of all way-side religion.

At Lend we found beds in Straubingen's Inn, which has been kept by the same family some three hundred years. Here we left the Pongau, and turned up the valley towards Bad Gastein, about fifteen miles off. First, however, we strolled to a pretty waterfall close by, and idled an hour outside the inn door. Then we found an available little chaise which promised a cheap lift, and, as there was a regular road the whole way, we drove, especially since we saw a promise of rain. Our stupid driver, however, thought he would try a short cut, and presently came to a standstill in the worst track passable by wheels. We got out, and, falling in with a peasant, were led by him into the main road, but not before we had given our driver a strong dose of dictionary. The first part of our way led through the Pass of Klamme—a grand defile, so narrow that you would hardly have supposed that a broad fertile valley—the Gasteinerthal—lay beyond it. But this hidden district was long ago famous for its gold mines, and is now familiar to the world as the scene of the Gastein Convention. We dined at Hof; and here I noticed in the printed list of arrivals at Bad Gastein the small number of our fellow-countrymen who had visited it in the previous year: out of one thousand and thirty-eight names only thirty-seven were English. We saw but two when we were there, though the place was cram-full. Bad Gastein is prettily situated at the end of the valley, and consists of a hotel, with a cascade through it. There are, in fact, several hotels, but this was our first impression of the place. The cascade makes a noise so great that you wonder, on your arrival, how people, especially invalids, who abound in Gastein, can manage to sleep; but even two or three hours wear off the strangeness of the noise, and you soon forget that many tons of water are crashing down upon the rocks beneath your window. Here we rejoined our friend L—, and arranged to go with him the next day to Heiligenblut, via Bucheben. This expedition needed a guide, and our inquiries for one showed a great difference between Switzerland and the Tyrol. In the former place, at such a frequented village as Gastein, close under the main Alpine range, we could have had our pick of a score at once; but there was only one to be found, a goitred, narrow-chested fellow, who looked singularly unfit for his work. He said he knew of a man to help in carrying our packs; and each charged about twice as much as an Oberland porter, who would have shouldered their united burdens with ease. However, there was no help for it, and our man turned out a better fellow than he looked. Tyrol is the place for the tourist who carries his own knapsack, and is not greedy about excursions on the ice. Carriages and porters are very dear.

We let much of the day slip by before we started for Heiligenblut, and it was twelve o'clock when the head-

waiter at the hotel, who despised us openly for walking over the hills instead of taking post-horses, like gentlemen, along the regular turnpike-road, made us a curt-like bow, and turned on his heel to attend to more dependent guests. We kept the main road for about half an hour, and then worked up the hills on our left, sloping through fields and plantations till we reached the bare mountain side, which led towards the col we proposed crossing that day. It is a walk of six hours, excluding rests, from Bad Gastein to Bucheben, commanding grand views; but, most unfortunately, L— managed to put his foot into a hole, or slip, or do something which wrung his knee just as we had passed the ridge and begun the descent into the valley of Rauris. We were, therefore, glad to see him at last drag his leg into the little inn at Bucheben, hoping that a night's rest would set him up for the longer and heavier walk on the next day to Heiligenblut, over the Rauriser-Tauern. If good food and a sympathising face could have cured him, our landlord would have set him to rights; for we met with a dish of most excellent chamois, and a kindly reception, which contrasted pleasantly with the magnificent condescension of the cheating head-waiter at Gastein. The little "public" at Bucheben, which is a sample of most village inns in the Tyrol, was intensely religious in its arrangements. Over the door was the motto "Good luck to you! God gives it." When I sat down and ordered some of the beer for which the Rauris valley is deservedly famous, it was brought in a mug bearing the inscription, "Drink and eat, and forget not God." Crucifixes stood in three corners of the parlour; my bed had a large "I.H.S." at its head, and a dove, emblem of the Holy Ghost, hanging from the ceiling; while the walls of the room were covered with rude pictures of saints.

Everything was beautifully clean and cheap. Most of the Tyrolese country inns have only one sitting-room for tourists, their guides, and any stray topers from the village, and you are expected to sleep three or four in a room. Sometimes, indeed, there are more beds than these in the same apartment; and if the house is full you must take what you can get. J—, L—, and I were chummed together, and I think we did not anywhere meet with a single-bedded room, except, of course, in the regular hotels.

Next morning poor L—'s knee was nearly as bad as ever, in spite of plentiful rubbing with arnica, the best thing for a sprain; so we determined to give up Heiligenblut, and, descending into the Pinzgau to Mittersill, and then going over the Pass Thurn by Kitzbühel, get to Wörgl, on the Innsbruck and Salzburg railway. Let me say, however, before we leave Bucheben, that a charming mountain walk lies from it to Heiligenblut; then you should cross over to Kals, whence you can go to Brunecken; take a turn of four or five days in the Dolomite district, ending at Botzen; from this I would advise the passage over the main chain of the Alps to Innsbruck. From Innsbruck you should go by Landek over the Finstermünz; then over the Stelvio, then from Santa Maria, just over this last pass, to Santa Catarina; then, over the main chain again, down the Vale di Sole to Trent: and so out of the country by the Lago di Garda. I put this down at the time; we came into parts of it afterwards, and, indeed, saw a good deal of the country; but, after much careful dovetailing of routes, consultation of maps and people who knew best what they were about, we came to the conclusion that no connected tour would embrace the characteristics of the country better than that which I have just sketched out, and which we had intended to take. It involves nothing but what a fair walker can do easily; it takes you into

the most interesting valleys and over the finest passes, and you nowhere retrace your steps. You have a fresh and varied district continually before you. It also enables you to take an occasional lift, as between Innsbruck and Landek, in the eilwagen or stellwagen.

To return to our lame companion at Bucheben. We fell in with a capital guide, who sorely wanted to take us over the Rauriser-Tauern, but L— could not have managed it; so we got him a country cart, and set our faces downwards towards the Pinzgau, into which we descended at Taxenbach. L— was obliged to carry himself and knapsack part of the way, as there was nothing in the shape of a porter to be had. True, at last, when wheels could not go on, we took the horse out of our cart, and made him bear our traps as far as he could go, to the exceeding discomfort of our driver, who remonstrated at our quietly detaching the beast from the cart and tying the luggage on his back. But there was no help for him (we were three to one); so we left the cart, loaded the horse, and, suggesting the alternative of his being deserted in his turn, set off, our driver grumbling after us on foot. Finding him coolly indifferent to the bargain we had made at starting, we thought we might legitimately insist on carrying out our intention our own way. Descending the brow of the hill, where at last we left our driver and his horse, we reached Taxenbach leisurely, and inquired for some vehicle to take us to Bruck, the next village in the Pinzgau. There was none to be had, until, at last, we rummaged up a wonderful old concern, which had been condemned, I should think, for years. Then, after a long search, finding horses to match, we set off, reaching Bruck in three-quarters of an hour. As there was a good slice of the evening left, we tried to persuade our driver to go on to Piesendorf; but he conferred with the landlady of the inn, and she, seeing we had a lame gentleman with us who was not likely to walk, supported the driver in his peremptory refusal to stir another inch, while the hangers-on about the inn door smiled at our obvious discomfiture. The confident landlady was already counting her gains, which, to judge by her face, would have been unmerciful, when L— settled the matter by putting on his knapsack, and expressing his determination to hobble onwards, cost what it might. No one likes to be made a prisoner rudely. These people were so sure of their prey that they made no secret whatever of their greediness. So I was vastly pleased at L—'s resolution, and, making my bow to the landlady, and at the same time declining to pay our driver any "drink-money," left them deservedly and obviously conscious that they had counted their chickens before they were hatched. I am afraid I was showing the pleasure of retaliation when I felt rather shamed by two pretty little children who joined the party of onlookers, and running up to L—, who has a very priestly visage and mien, kissed his hands as a parting salutation. We could not be angry any more, though a fellow J— picked up at Bruck to carry his knapsack to Piesendorf, kept up the rude character of his seniors as soon as we reached our destination, by loudly demanding very much more than he had agreed to receive for the job.

Next morning we took the stellwagen to Mittersill, and drove over the Thurm pass to Wörgl on the Innsbruck rail. The scenery is very fine: one appreciates here the great width of some of these Tyrolese valleys. This, moreover, was skirted by a number of small lateral ones, each teeming with inhabitants, and suggesting how many districts for fresh excursions may be found in this country. We did not meet a single tourist, much less Englishman, in this part of our route. I have no doubt

that you might wander about here for weeks, and frequently find yourself in places which no tourist had ever visited, so thin at present is the stream of holiday-makers which trickles through the Austrian Alps. On the "great" post roads, as at Bruck, the innkeepers are grasping and rude; but, once off the line traversed by the highway, you meet with great civility and cheapness. This contrast is most remarkable here. In an hour you seem to pass into a different race of people. Even on the cross-road between Mittersill and Wörgl we found the people much more simple and moderate in their charges than their neighbours at the post-stations in the main valley.

Let me here mention one Tyrolese religious characteristic which you meet with continually, but which struck us forcibly in the course of this afternoon drive. We had stopped at a little way-side inn, a mere village public-house, to bait our animals, when I strolled carelessly into the tap-room to find its floor covered by the kneeling household. They were all at prayer, the publican leading, and the rest responding in a loud voice. The ostler got up and came out with a bundle of hay, and then walked back tip-toe and retook his place. We found and left them all praying, and yet we staid there at least twenty minutes. Their voices came out through the open window, audible at a distance of many yards; but they let us come and go without for a moment suspending their devotions. You may pass in the evening through whole villages which seem to be deserted were it not for the hum of prayer which rises from every house. We were anxious, if possible, to catch a late train at Wörgl, and get to Innsbruck that night, in order to join in the English service held there on the following day, which was Sunday; but we could not manage it. However, we so arranged that we were able to get to Innsbruck by nine the next morning, in good time for us to make ourselves decent before the eleven o'clock service, which was held in a room at the hotel, and where we found ourselves again in the main track of English tourists, there being some fifty worshippers present.

DISILLUSION;

OR, MARY OF THE MILL AND THE COUNTESS MARIA.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SPRING is always regarded as the right time for travelling. It is the charming time, when the little flowers open again, and when the foliage of the trees unfolds itself in the fresh green of hope; the joyful time when the brooks run freely again, and the little children bask in the sun.

But it seems to me that spring is the best time for staying at home, if one has a pleasant home to stay in—a home with a view over green trees, and a path out into the fields. The simplest scene is lovely to behold, when arrayed in its festal garments; it does one so much good to open the long-shut windows for the fresh spring air to come in, and to take long walks with one's family by green hedges, and over flowery meads. We seek the first snow-drops and violets at home, not on our travels.

But autumn is really a delightful time for travelling, when the earth once more puts on her beautifully variegated garments. It is delightful to go out in autumn, and to enjoy to the full the last beauty of the parting year; and then to return to a happy, peaceful home, where a comfortable room, warm hearts, and loving eyes are awaiting us.

On the evening of a beautiful autumn day, there wandered under the fruit-laden trees, in the midst of the busy crowd of men, a stranger, who had no peaceful home open to him for the winter. His face was tanned by the sun of distant lands, and he looked older than he really was. He carried his light travelling knapsack on his shoulder, and seemed to wander aimlessly along, not with the firm, decided step of one who has a distinct end in view which he wishes to reach before night. The neighbourhood through which he was walking was not one which tourists often visit. It was only a district of Swabia, and not so charming and picturesque as many other spots which might be found in this beautiful region.

To the right stretched out wide fields of corn which had long ago been reaped; only pale-red convolvulus and late corn-flowers bloomed amidst the stubble, while the view was bounded by a soft line of hills. To the left sloped down a meadow-land not spangled with flowers, like the first early grass, but resting in soft tender green, which does good to the eye, as peaceful resignation does good to the heart. On both sides of the road stood trees, laden with fruit; their rich blessing was being broken or shaken off, while merry children played under the trees, picking up and eating the fruit, and springing away with screams, when the saucy lad who sat on the branches threw down a few apples upon them.

The wanderer was George Rau, and the scene was not far from his father's farm; but he had not returned to his old home.

He was returning from his long and varied travels. After his journey he had spent some time in France, in order to assist in the completion of a work relating to the expedition; and now he had returned to his fatherland, although he might, perhaps, have been able to find some certain employment in a foreign country. Why he did so, he scarcely knew himself, as nothing remained there which he might call his own.

Before he left Germany, three years ago, he had told no one of his plans, and had only written to his mother after he set off on his travels. Her letters had not reached him, and he found, on his return, that she had emigrated with her husband to America.

After long consideration, he had resolved to make inquiries after the miller's family, from an old university friend who was settled as a doctor in a little town near the Mill. He heard that Christian, while still very young, had married a widow, and lived with her at the Mill; that the widow of the old miller had retired with her daughter to the Moravian brotherhood at K—, and had died there; that, as far as his friend knew, the daughter did not at present live at K—; it was said that she had married a clergyman; but he could find out all about her at the Parsonage at K—.

George did not ask any further. He was now on the way to a little town where a doctor was wanted; he intended to settle there if the place pleased him. He thought that he could easily earn enough to live upon, and he longed for some work, and some calling in life.

As there was no need for haste, he had taken plenty of time for his wanderings; but now he was tired, the sun was going down, and there was no village in sight. "How far is it to the nearest place where one can get a good night's lodging?" he asked of a man who was pushing a hand-cart full of apples before him.

"It is a good two miles to A—."

"That is a long way," said the weary traveller. "Are you going as far as that with your apples?"

"No, I am going down to this village, but there is no inn there." And he pushed his cart to one side, and disappeared down a tempting green path between hedges which led down to the village, the white houses of which glimmered behind the green trees.

"The hospitality of the Arab who invites every stranger into his tent does not rule in my beloved home," thought George. He did not consider that the peasant would have thought it too bold to invite the fine gentleman into his hut on a beautiful evening, when there was only a mile or two of good road to go before reaching an inn, and that the peasants are not at all accustomed to provide for unexpected guests, and that strangers in general are not contented to drink camel's milk, and to stretch themselves out on a mat, as they do in an Arab tent.

But George had learnt to provide for himself in travelling; the high road stretched out before him dusty and dreary, his weariness increased, and the village looked so very attractive that he resolved on seeking a night's lodging there. "It may be that I shall find a glass of milk and an old arm-chair to rest in," thought he; "at the worst I may find some one who will drive me in an ox-cart to the next inn." So he went down the path by which the peasant had disappeared.

The few grand houses of the village stood detached in the midst of gardens or courtyards, surrounded by the evidences of husbandry. A much smaller house stood apart from the rest, in a vegetable garden, which was surrounded by a low, well-kept fence. This little house was by far the most inviting: it was painted a dazzling white, with clear windows; there was a lovely little garden round the house, from which was wafted the delicious scent of gilliflowers and autumn roses. Under the lime-tree, which overtopped the house in front, stood a seat, and a little table. There were flower-boxes before the windows, and a little canary bird, a rare guest in villages, fluttered about in his cage between them. Of all cottages and palaces which he had seen, no dwelling had ever seemed so delightful to George as this little cottage. If ever peace were to be found in the wide world, it must dwell here. He boldly opened the little gate in the hedge, and walked up to the front door, which he easily opened.

This front door was at the same time the door of the room; straight out of the green garden, with its grass and flowers, one could enter the bright room, into the windows of which the last sunbeams were shining, and which occupied half of the house. An arm-chair stood by the window, in which sat an old man, whose snow-white locks peeped out from below his black velvet cap; a slight girl, in a gray dress, with smooth light hair, was sitting on a chair opposite him, and reading aloud; an atlas and a lexicon were lying on the table between them. The girl looked up, surprised, as the door opened; a pair of clear brown eyes gazed at him fixedly for one moment, not as one would look at a stranger, but at some one who had been long expected. With a light step she came towards him, gave him her hand, and said, in the loving tone which he had never quite forgotten, "God bless you, George; you are come at last!"

"Mary! are you Mary?" he cried, as if in a dream. "How did you come here, and how could you know that I was coming?"

"I always thought," said she, with her old trusting smile, "that you would come in at that door, and would be glad to find me here. I have been here with my dear old schoolmaster for some time." She now introduced him, as Dr. Rau, to the old schoolmaster, who did not quite know what was going on, and rose from his seat with difficulty.

"You remember George of the Firs, do you not?"

"Oh, yes," said the old man, "I remember your good parents very well; but how have you found your way to our little village? Even Frederick did not find it in the war."

"The doctor will tell you all about it when he has had some refreshment." Mary hastened out of the room, and returned with a small stone jug, a glass as clear as crystal, and some nice white bread on a green porcelain plate, and poured him out some sparkling wine as clear as gold. "We have some good wine," said she. "My grandfather—I call him so because I never knew a grandfather of my own—drinks very little; so he must have good and pure wine."

George sat down on Mary's chair, opposite the old man, as if he had sat there every evening, and heard from him how he had become too old for his work, and had inherited this house from his brother. "Then, at first, I was troubled with a stupid old housekeeper," he complained, "and I greatly regretted the death of my dear wife. But about that time the miller's wife died at K——, and when I was at her funeral I pitied the poor child Mary who was left quite alone in the world; and so she came to me, and has stayed with me ever since. God alone knows what a blessed child she has been to me!"

While the old man was sounding the praises of his darling, Mary was bustling about in the little kitchen, which was connected with the sitting-room by a door and a sash-window; her little maid had returned from the well, and was much astonished to find a strange visitor there. The soup and pancakes for the festive meal were simmering and hissing, and Mary came noiselessly in and out, spread a cloth over the oaken table in the middle of the room, said a cheerful word now and then to each, and begged that the doctor would wait to give an account of his travels till she was by.

How was it that everything seemed so delightful to George?—he had never felt so much at home in his life.

In Mary's manner there was none of that artificial politeness and kindness which may conceal the restrained bitterness of a wounded heart. It was the pure goodness of a faithful heart, which had never known bitterness, or had been sweetened by the grace of pious resignation.

How comfortably those three sat at the table, with the footstool running round it, which reminded George of the table at the Mill! And as he found Mary blooming in her unfaded beauty, all these images which had deceived him, and caused him such happiness and such unspeakable misery, now melted away like mist.

"But where shall I find accommodation for the night?" asked George, when he had done full honour to the meal. "May I stay in your grandfather's armchair? I can sleep anywhere."

"No, indeed; we have a spare room," boasted Mary, with pride, "upstairs, near grandfather's bedroom and mine. The clergyman, grandfather's nephew, often comes; and his wife and children have sometimes visited us."

And it was a most comfortable room—the miller's Mary always knew how to make her arrangements. George slept there soundly till the bright morning, when he came down into the sunny room, with green leaves peeping in at the windows, where Mary had already spread out a tempting breakfast on the table by the window.

"Have you slept well?" asked the cheerful old man, quite pleased and proud to have a guest.

George had, indeed. His slumber had been so sweet, his dreams so peaceful, and his awakening so fresh—he had never slept so well since his childhood.

He allowed himself three days of delightful rest in the village; and Mary led him along all the quiet, peaceful paths where she was used to wander alone, or with the old schoolmaster, amidst the green meadows, by the side of clear brooks, and through small beech-woods.

He then laid all his past life, all his errors and disappointments, before her; and this did him good. Mary had not asked for an explanation or confession. "I know that you did not mean to grieve me, and that you then thought that you could not do otherwise; if you were wrong, you have been the chief sufferer."

"But I did grieve you, Mary; have you not suffered?" he asked. He did not wish that she should have recovered his loss too soon.

"I was very unhappy, dear George, and exceedingly miserable, till I had learnt to say with a humble heart, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord,'" she added, softly; and the light of God's sweet, deep peace, which surrounded her whole being, shone out clearly and fully in her eyes.

"I knew," she continued, "that you would return some day. I often pictured that you would come, ill and weary, and in want of help, and for that object I took a pleasure in saving up my father's property; but you do not want that now."

"I do not want that," cried George. "I have not gathered together much treasure on my journey, and I have not returned much richer than I went out; but I feel power and courage sufficient to build up a future for myself. Yes, I am poor—poor in peace and heart-joy—and I want a heart which may make my house a home. Have you not forgiven me, Mary? When I have established my household, may I not lead you home as my highest earthly good?"

Then Mary gently shook her head. "You know," she repeated, "that I have never been angry with you. I will care for you like a sister. It will rejoice my inmost soul if you will share all my property with me, like a brother, for my own brother does not need it. If you do not choose another wife, I will come and live with you when we are both old enough, and I will remain with you till death parts us, but—"

"You will not be my wife; I have trifled with you too much," said George, with bitter sadness.

"Look here," continued Mary, and a deep blush overspread her face: "you shall not choose me as your wife because you consider it as a duty towards the Mary to whom you were once engaged, and whom you forsook, and not because you are weary of the world, and wish to rest in a home of your own, with your own wife. I will be your faithful sister, and will care for you, and live for you as far as I can; but I can be your wife only when you are certain, and can declare to me before God, that you love me before any one else, next to God, and that you can conceive of no earthly joy without me, and no sorrow which you cannot share with me; and that you may know this, you must first live some time in the world, and prove your own heart."

The miller's child proudly kept to her word, even at parting, when George would gladly have carried away some certain answer.

But when he returned, after some months, and told her that he had found a useful, lucrative sphere of labour, in which to earn his own bread, a point on which the miller had always insisted so strongly; when he could assure her before God that he desired no earthly

good so fervently as her love, as her pious, faithful heart, which might help him in finding his way to heaven, she could not refuse, repeating inwardly her mother's text in joyful humility, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word."

Mary did not wish to leave the old schoolmaster so soon. "You have already waited long enough," she said playfully to George; "you can wait a little longer; grandfather cannot do without me." But George would not wait. The old man should share Mary's home; and he consented to do so, in order to be no hindrance to their happiness. But this never came to pass. A few days after George had led his bride to the altar, the clergyman's little daughter, who was remaining with the old schoolmaster till his removal, found him sleeping in death in his arm-chair. His Bible was open before him at the chapter which describes Moses viewing the land of promise before his death.

George has heard nothing more of the Countess Maria; only sometimes those days of splendour, of happiness and sorrow, float like a dream before his memory. By Mary's side he has found the best and most delightful happiness that man can desire on earth: a calling in which, though with hard labour, he may use the power which God has given him, and receive his blessing upon it; and a home in which he may rejoice, which makes earth dear to him, and teaches him to look up in joyful hope to Heaven.

A HARVEST HOME AT A REFORMATORY SCHOOL.

How pleasant are the ideas connected with a harvest home! The mere utterance of the words is sufficient to transplant in imagination those who spend their days amidst the bricks and mortar and smoke of a great city into the country, and to conjure up visions of rural delight. In the minds of all, whether citizen or rustic, a harvest home is associated with scenes of merriment and rejoicing; with cheerful hearts and merry voices; with substantial feasts and vigorous appetites; with pleasant looks and joyous choruses; would we could always add, with humble prayers and heartfelt thanksgivings to the Lord of the harvest, who sends us the fruits of the earth in their season!

One fine autumn morning last year I strolled leisurely up the hill leading from the railway-station at Redhill, bound for the Farm School of the Philanthropic Society, which lies about a mile distant. It was the 12th of September; not that that fact was of much importance, perhaps, to the world in general, but to all connected with the Philanthropic it meant a great deal, for it was their harvest home—their great annual holiday, when prizes were to be awarded, speeches made, good resolutions formed for the future, and thanksgivings returned for the past. Two hundred and sixty boys, every one of whom had either once or oftener felt the grasp of a policeman, and stood in the prison dock, were to hold a festival in honour of harvest labour.

Whilst thus moralising, we reach the entrance to the farm, and, passing under an arch of evergreens, surmounted very appropriately by a beehive, we gain the chaplain's residence. Here, standing on a gentle eminence, we have a general view of the estate, a little over 300 acres in extent, 260 being the freehold property of the charity. The boys are not, as might be supposed, all lodged in one large building, but in five neat brick-built houses dotted about the property at some

distance from each other, each house being under the care of a master and his wife, and bearing the distinctive names of Gladstone's, Gurney's, Queen's, Waterland's, and Garston's, the first two having been founded by the gentlemen whose names they bear—William Gladstone, Esq., treasurer of the society, and Samuel Gurney, Esq., M.P. The railway runs through the estate, which we may here mention is found very productive, spade labour only being used. The greater part of the land is arable, and at the time mentioned the whole of the harvest had been got in, with the exception of a small patch of barley.

But a few yards distant from the chaplain's residence, at the back of which is the secretary's office, stands the chapel, where every evening in summer and every morning in winter the whole of the boys assemble for prayer, praise, and instruction. To-day the unpretending little edifice presents an unusually attractive appearance, being decorated with evergreens, flowers, mottoes, &c.; and the beautiful little organ, which some nine months previously had been presented by one of the oldest friends of the charity, shines out in all the splendour of newly diapered pipes and gilt accessories. On such occasions as the present, by a very convenient arrangement, the building is enlarged to nearly double its usual dimensions by the removal of the screen which, on one side, divides it from a spacious dining-hall, and thus accommodation is provided for the numerous visitors who begin to press in, in order to take part in the festival service. These ladies and gentlemen being seated, the whole of the boys, who had meanwhile been marshalled in a meadow a few hundred yards off, marched in and took their seats with military precision, singing, to the accompaniment played by the excellent secretary of the institution, Dean Alford's hymn—

"Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of Harvest Home."

Appearances are proverbially deceitful, and we know that often a visitor to a lunatic asylum has been unable, from observation alone, to distinguish between the physician and his patient; but certainly, as we looked in the faces of the boys assembled in that chapel, we could not avoid the mental observation that no one unacquainted with their history would have taken them for what they were—criminals under a judicial sentence. Nor need this surprise any one: the raw material of human nature is very similar all the world over; and, though habits of vice and debasing passions invariably leave their mark upon the brow, it, like other marks, may be effaced, *if taken in time*. It is upon this principle that the Philanthropic Society was founded in 1788, and the results which have been attained fully attest its soundness. But of this more hereafter; at present we are in church, and must not let our thoughts wander, at any rate, unrebuked. The service was that specially prepared by Convocation for harvest thanksgivings; and it was pleasant to hear the unanimity with which the responses were given and hymns sung by the boys. The sermon, on Ruth ii. 4, was appropriate, practical, and brief; and that over, and a final hymn sung, the boys left the chapel in the same admirable order in which they had entered it. On following them outside, we found them formed four deep, and headed by a brass band; and in this order, with flags waving, they returned to the meadow, where a competitive examination into their various degrees of excellence in the useful arts of running, jumping (within sacks and without), throwing the hammer, &c., was arranged.

By this time the skies had begun to contribute an unwelcome offering to the fête; but it would have

required a very heavy shower indeed to damp the ardour of the competitors for the different prizes. For ourselves, we do not take quite so much interest in feats of agility as we did some years ago, and we therefore beguiled the time by a little interesting conversation with the masters. All seemed to agree that the boys behaved as well and even better than could be expected; and it is gratifying to find that what is justly considered a most serious offence, that of desertion, is on the decrease. We ventured to ask whether they were principally new-comers, or boys who had been there some time, who ran away, and were pleased to find that the former were the principal offenders. "If it were the other way, it would show there was something wrong," was the remark of our informant, with which we quite agreed. Having expressed a desire, or rather been invited, to inspect one of the houses, we made our way to it across the fields, and were kindly shown, by the master's wife, the whole of the arrangements. The boys of each house, to the number generally of about fifty, constitute one family, governed by the master and his wife, and independent of all the rest—in many respects even their rivals, as certain prizes, in particular the Chaplain's Shield of Honour, are awarded usually to the "house" which has been, on the whole, most deserving during the year. The principal employment is agriculture, and this department is of course superintended by a farm bailiff; but a few of the boys are also taught tailoring, carpentering, shoemaking, &c., in order to supply the necessities of the establishment in these departments. We noticed, also, a small gas-holder and retort-house, from which the various houses are supplied, and learned that all the boys take turns at washing (by machine), and the bigger ones, in summer, at brickmaking. The "house" we visited, and which is a fair sample of the whole, is a plain, substantial brick building of one storey. On the upper floor are the dormitories, two large rooms and a smaller one, in which the elder boys sleep; the bedsteads are all of iron, rather close together; but any want of space laterally is made up in the height, the whole gable of the roof being thrown in to give full ventilation. The boards, notwithstanding our guide's remark that they could not make the boys scrub them as clean as they should like, appeared quite as white as the natural colour of the wood; and, in fact, the neatness and cleanliness of everything it would be next to impossible to surpass. On the ground-floor are the kitchen, master's apartments, storehouse, punishment cells (not dark), and schoolroom. In the storeroom we had an opportunity of seeing the small home-made loaf which forms each boy's breakfast or supper ration, and felt quite satisfied that even country appetites were duly allowed for. The cells are only used occasionally for serious offences, very extreme ones only being visited with corporal punishment: in 1865, for instance, the average number of cell punishments in each house was not quite twenty-eight; of floggings, forty-four. Indeed, a glance at the rules, which are hung up in the schoolroom, speedily convinces one that hope rather than fear is the ruling principle, and that the school is regarded more as a place for reformation and improvement than for punishment. All minor offences, such as breach of discipline, neglect of lessons, impertinence—which is probably English for the offence which one of the boys described to us as "cheeking any one"—are visited with bad marks. When a boy has kept free from marks for one month, his name is placed on the good-conduct list; if he keeps it there three months uninterruptedly, he is entitled to a gratuity of 1d. per week; in six

months he is honoured with a good-conduct stripe, in eight months he has 1½d. weekly, and in twelve months 2d.: and there are other privileges which only the best boys are entitled to, such as holidays, being sent off the farm on errands, &c. The principle of self-government and mutual dependence is also brought into play, gross cases of misconduct affecting not only the individual offender, but also the family to which he belongs; whilst in case of desertion the expenses of recovery have to be contributed by the boys of the family from which it takes place. Those boys who like may have a strip of garden ground, whilst others amuse themselves with keeping starlings and blackbirds. The object is not so much to make good scholars as honest workmen, as will be seen from the following division of time:—In summer, rise at half-past five, work from six to eight, when breakfast and play occupy an hour; nine to twelve, one half of each family work, while the other half are at school, taking alternate days; twelve to one, dinner and play; one to half-past five, work; quarter-past six, supper; seven, chapel; and to bed at eight. In the winter rise half an hour later, go to school before breakfast, then chapel; work the whole day, with the exception of an hour at dinner-time; supper at six, and school afterwards until bed-time. Space does not admit of our giving a detailed description of the farm buildings, cow-sheds, piggeries, and dairy, all of which are kept in admirable order; but we must not omit the answer of one of the servants to our usual question, how he found the boys behave. "Very well, indeed, sir; better than I do, I'm thinking, and I shouldn't be here if there was much the matter with me."

The games and races being all brought to a satisfactory termination, all adjourned to a tent at the back of the chapel, and were soon fully occupied—the boys in discussing a most ample tea, accompanied with a good allowance of cold meat, and—special treat—mustard; and the visitors in watching the wonderful performances of the boys, and chatting with those who could spare a moment from the important matter in hand, or rather in mouth. It was very pleasing to witness the enthusiasm with which various members of the committee, well known to the boys, were welcomed on entering the tent, showing plainly that the kindness of these gentlemen is appreciated by those on whom it is bestowed; nor is this a mere transitory feeling of gratitude, or one whose expression is due to any self-seeking motives, which may sometimes actuate boys as well as men, when in the presence of those whom they suppose to be wealthy as well as benevolent; for the fact must not be forgotten that not a few "old boys" gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of revisiting the scene of their former training, and even from distant colonies send contributions from their hard earnings towards the fund for the adornment of the chapel, that fund having been, in fact, founded by a youth in South Africa sending a handsome sum for the purposes of the Institution. After the repast had been done full justice to, the tables were cleared, and the treasurer, W. Gladstone, Esq., being installed in the chair, the ceremony of distributing the various agricultural, industrial, moral, school, general good conduct, and other prizes, commenced. Addresses, in which encouragement, exhortation, warning, and occasionally reproof were happily mingled, were delivered by the chairman, the chaplain, and other gentlemen present; and in the intervals songs and choruses were sung by the boys very creditably. The greatest interest was manifested in regard to the award of the Shield of Honour, which was kept a profound secret until the last moment, when considerable satisfaction

was evinced at finding that it would be held for the ensuing year by the only "house" which had never before enjoyed the honour. The possession of this shield carries with it several privileges—extra holidays, and so so; and as it was announced by the chaplain that in future any misconduct in the "house" holding the shield sufficiently grave to require its forfeiture would entail loss of holidays on the whole school, it is evident that every boy on the farm has a direct personal interest in doing all he can to encourage and promote good conduct, and repress insubordination in his companions; and we cannot doubt that to this principle of enlisting the boys themselves on the side of order and obedience, a great deal of the success which has attended the Society's operations is due.

Having already, we fear, wearied our readers, we must not further detain them, as we should like to have done, with some statistics showing the results which have been attained by the Philanthropic Society, and with a few extracts from some of the many interesting letters which are constantly being received from different parts of England and the colonies. Stating generally that about eighty per cent. of the boys who have left are known to be doing well, we conclude with two short extracts from letters from New South Wales:—

"Dear Sir,—I have put a money order inside my letter for the five pounds I promised to send you. You see I have not forgotten my promise, and I hope every boy will try and do the same. . . . I have seen a great many of the boys, and they are all doing well.

"H. H.—"

"Rev. Sir, you ask me to tell you all about myself. Now I will just begin. I am living a long with a man name Mr. G—, butcher, and he is a very good man. I get my £1 per week. Me and my mate we go in the bush and splitting wood for a hingine; we get £1 3s. per cord. We can get three cord per week, one for our master and 2 for ourself. I have £2 3s. every week for my own self. . . . Rev. Sir, if you please send me word howe much money it would be for tea and cake for Mr. Cowen's Boys—the Queen's House, I will pay it. This letter will be short and sweet, like a donkey race. I am thinking about getting married to a young girl about 18 years of age. Her father as got about £200 wourlth of cattle. He his getting very old. He has made them all over to me. So no more at present from your young friend,

"J. M.—"

Poetry.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE.

O Lord, remember not our many sins,
Nor for our crimes deal us the just award;
But hear us from thy throne when we entreat,
Not as the world gives, give us peace, O Lord.

When troubles surge around our earthly bark,
Losses by pestilence, or fire, or sword,
Oh, let thy Spirit calm the stormy waves:
Not as the world gives, give us peace, O Lord.

If riches grow, and worldly goods increase,
And troops of friends come clust'ring round our board,
Teach us to lift our humble thanks to thee:
Not as the world gives, give us peace, O Lord.

And when, O Lord, most holy—Lord, most high—
Thine angel, Death, shall loose the silver cord,
Through the dark valley guide our fearful steps:
Not as the world gives, give us peace, O Lord.

CECILIA SIDDONS FAULDEE.